

**REMARKS**

Claims 40-48 and 52-59 are pending in this application. By this Preliminary Amendment claims 40-48 and 52-59 are cancelled and new claims 60-77 are added. Support for the newly added claims are found throughout the Specification.

Specifically, oligonucleotide probes of "8 nucleotides" or more of new claims 60-73 are disclosed in Section II.H, on page 61 (*see also*, Figures 1, 3, 4, 14, 26, 57, 59, 62, 72 and 89). Use of polynucleotides representing HCV cDNA sequences for the detection of HCV is described in section II.J of the Specification (72:29-34). Use of HCV cDNA from a 353 nucleotide long clone 81 (*see* Figure 4 for sequence) for identifying RNA from liver by Northern hybridization is disclosed in section IV.C.1 of the Specification (170:28 - 171:19). 108 nucleotide HCV cDNA polynucleotide probe related to clone 81 is disclosed on page 176:12-16. Detection of HCV polynucleotide sequences 161 and 586 nucleotides in length is disclosed in section IV.C.3 and page 176:34-35 of the Specification. Polynucleotides having 10, 12, 15 and 20 contiguous nucleotides (claims 74-77) corresponding to a HCV genome are disclosed on pages 26:17 -- 27:15 and also on page 61: 15-18.

No new matter is added. Entry of the new claims is respectfully requested.

**CONCLUSION**

Applicants earnestly believe that they are entitled to a letters patent, and respectfully solicit the Examiner to expedite prosecution of this patent application to issuance. Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned. If the Examiner determines that the claims are not allowable, Applicants request an opportunity to interview the Examiner.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Assistant Commissioner to

charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 223002006316. However, the Assistant Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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